

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 have been examined. By this amendment, Applicants add claims 4-9. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-9 are all the claims pending in the application.

Applicants thanks the Examiner for acknowledging the claim for foreign priority and for verifying that the certified copy of the priority document was received in Application No.: 09/129,883.

I. Priority

The Examiner alleges that the application is not entitled to the benefit of the filing date of the patent application because no statement of priority is allegedly presented. The Examiner is mistaken. The application as filed on February 23, 2000 contains the statement of priority to its parent application 09/128,883 and to Japanese Application No. 9-228902 and U.S. Provisional Application No. 60/058,563. The specification has been amended to include this statement of priority.

II. Oath/Declaration

The Examiner objects to the oath/declaration because the oath identifies the U.S. Provisional Application as a “foreign” application for purposes of claiming priority. Applicants respectfully submit herewith a substitute declaration correcting the error and request that the Examiner withdrawn this objection.

III. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamagishi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,695,413) in view of Kasashima et al. (JP 09-290034). For at least the following reasons, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Applicants submit that this invention relates to a multi-piece solid golf ball having a cover of inner and outer layers in which cover hardness and dimples are optimized so as to improve flight distance performance.

In order to understand some of the features of the present invention sufficiently, Applicants respectfully direct the Examiner to the description of the present invention, page 1, line 25 to page 3, line 23. In the description, page 3, lines 5 to 11, discloses the following:

“...Accordingly, effective means for taking full advantage of the spin property dependent on the product of the Shore D hardnesses of the inner and outer layers and improving the flight performance of the golf ball is to divide the range of the product into sub-ranges and form dimples so as to satisfy the following two requirements associated with the sub-ranges of the product.”

The first of the two requirements (as set forth in independent claims 1 and 9) is as follows:

“a product of the Shore D hardness of said inner cover layer multiplied by the Shore D hardness of said outer cover layer and a proportion V_R (%) of the total of the volumes of dimple spaces each defined below a plane circumscribed by the dimple edge to the overall volume of a

phantom sphere given on the assumption that the golf ball surface is free of dimples satisfy any one of the following combinations (1) to (5):

(1) the product of Shore D hardnesses of inner and outer cover layers: 1,500 to less than 2,000

V_R : 0.80 to 0.95%

(2) the product of Shore D hardnesses of inner and outer cover layers: 2,000 to less than 2,500

V_R : 0.75 to 0.95%

(3) the product of Shore D hardnesses of inner and outer cover layers: 2,500 to less than 3,000

V_R : 0.70 to 0.95%

(4) the product of Shore D hardnesses of inner and outer cover layers: 3,000 to less than 3,500

V_R : 0.65 to 0.95%

(5) the product of Shore D hardnesses of inner and outer cover layers: 3,500 to 4,000

V_R : 0.60 to 0.90%”

Yamagishi et al. (USPN 5,695,413) disclose that the outer layer of the solid core (corresponding to the inner cover layer of the present invention) has a Shore D hardness of 20 to

70 and the cover has a Shore D hardness of 50 to 63. Also, Kasashima et al. (JP Publication 09-290034) disclose that the dimple total volume ratio V_R is 0.6 to 1.5%.

However, both the cited references fail to disclose the claimed relationship between the product of Shore D hardnesses of inner and outer cover layers and the proportion V_R (%) of the total of the volumes of dimple spaces.

The second of the two requirements (as set forth in the independent claims 1 and 9) is as follows:

“and said dimples include at least three types of dimples which are different in at least one of a diameter, a depth, and a value V_0 which is the volume of one dimple space defined below a plane circumscribed by the dimple edge divided by the volume of a cylinder whose bottom is the plane and whose height is the maximum depth of the dimple from the bottom” [as set forth in both claims 1 and 9]

(i) “wherein the dimples of the largest type have the diameter of 3.7 to 4.5 mm, the depth of 0.15 to 0.25 mm and the V_0 value of 0.38 to 0.55, and their number is 5 to 80% of the total dimple number” [as set forth in claim 1],

(ii) “wherein the dimples of the smallest type have the diameter of 2.0 to 3.7 mm, the depth of 0.08 to 0.23 mm and the V_0 value of 0.38 to 0.55, and their number is 1 to 40% of the total dimple number” [as set forth in claim 9].

Both the cited references (Yamagishi et al. and Kasashima et al.) are silent on the second requirement described above. In particular, Kasashima et al. do not disclose the elements (such

as the diameter, the depth, the V_0 value, and the number of the dimples) for either the smallest type or the largest type dimples.

In summary, the combination of Yamagishi and Kasashima fail to teach the claimed relationship between the Shore D product of the cover layers and the V_R values of the dimples or the individual claim ranges of Shore D product to V_R value.

Accordingly, each of the cited references fails to disclose and teach the multi-piece solid golf ball of the present invention and the feature thereof.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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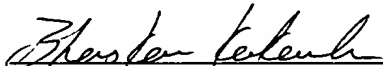
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